

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended and claim 4 is added. Support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found at least at paragraph [0044] of the specification. Claims 2-3 are amended for clarity. Support for the subject matter of claim 4 may be found at least at paragraphs [0043] - [0044] of the specification and in Fig. 1. No new matter is added. In view of at least the following, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives by Examiner Culbert at the personal interview held May 14, 2009, and the telephone interview held May 15, 2009 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Actions rejects claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (APA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,182,140 (Watanabe); and rejects claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over APA in view of Watanabe and further in view of JP 2002-204958 (Nakamura). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that APA and Watanabe in combination, render obvious each and every feature of independent claim 1. As confirmed in the personal interview, Applicants respectfully submit that the applied references, taken alone or in any combination, do not teach or render obvious the features of independent claim 1.

As discussed during the interview, APA, alone or in combination with Watanabe, fails to disclose that a process for producing a filter catalyst wherein each of the axial opposite ends of a catalyst-support substrate defines at least two openings, the at least two openings being alternately sealed with a sealing material, as recited in claim 1. Nakamura does not cure the deficiencies of APA and Watanabe.

Thus, APA, Watanabe and Nakamura, alone or in any combination, do not disclose or render obvious each and every feature of independent claim 1.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1. Because the applied references fail to anticipate or render obvious the features recited in independent claim 1, dependent claims 2 and 3 are patentable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is patentable, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

II. New Claim 4 Defines Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully submit that the applied references, taken alone or in any combination, do not teach or render obvious at least the features of "holding one of the axial opposite ends of the catalyst-support substrate to which the first pressure is given and another axial opposite end thereof to which a higher pressure than the first pressure is given in such a state that a pressure difference is given therebetween; holding the one of the axial opposite ends of the catalyst-support substrate and the other axial opposite end thereof in an identical pressure state; and holding one of the axial opposite ends of the catalyst-support substrate to which the second pressure is given and another axial opposite end thereof to which a lower pressure than the second pressure is given in such a state that a pressure difference is given therebetween," as recited in independent claim 4.

Accordingly, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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